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C O N F I D E N T I A L VIENNA 001511

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR EUR/CE AND SCA/A

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/25/2019
TAGS: [NATO](#) [PREL](#) [MOPS](#) [MARR](#) [AF](#) [AU](#)
SUBJECT: AUSTRIA SUPPORTS U.S. GOALS IN AFGHANISTAN, STILL
UNDECIDED ON SPECIFICS

REF: STATE 120807

Classified by: DCM Christopher Hoh for reasons 1.4 (b) and
(d).

¶1. (C) In place of the Ambassador, who was traveling in country, the DCM met November 24 with Johannes Kyrle, MFA Secretary General, to discuss reftel points. The DCM emphasized that the U.S. is looking for allies and partners to make strong public statements of support following the announcement of the President's decision on Afghanistan. He said the U.S. will be devoting more resources to the mission in Afghanistan, as well as Pakistan, and will also work with NATO/ISAF partners on developing benchmarks to measure progress. Our civil-military plans are designed to prepare Afghans to take on greater responsibility. We are urging countries that place a high emphasis on human rights and rule of law to support the mission in Afghanistan, he said, noting the importance of next year's London conference for coordinating international efforts with GOA activities.

¶2. (C) Kyrle said the GOA recognizes the threat posed by al-Qa'ida and the importance of the Afghanistan/Pakistan mission. He said that he, personally, supports an increased Austrian role. Noting that Austria had successfully helped train Iraqi police in the past, Kyrle maintained that Austria has the expertise to do the same for Afghanistan. However, any Afghanistan program would require a political decision, and GOA elected leaders have yet to agree on any new support, he said.

Background

¶3. (C) The Ambassador has urged the Austrians to increase their Afghanistan contribution on a number of occasions, including in meetings with Justice Minister Bandion-Ortner and Interior Minister Fekter, as well as in initial calls on the President and Prime Minister. FM Spindelegger had at one point announced that Austria would support training for Afghan police, but MFA contacts say there is an ongoing internal GOA debate. In a Nov. 20 meeting with Interior Minister Fekter, Ministry representatives noted that they are still engaged in discussions about Austrian participation in either a joint Canadian-Indonesian or in a EUPOL police training mission. In both cases, the Minister insisted Austria would only participate in programs outside of Afghanistan.

¶4. (C) Comment. We will continue to keep Afghanistan on the GOA radar screens, as we understand some of their EU partners are also doing. We do not expect decisions from Vienna on possible support measures, until at least the USG and NATO strategies have been announced. End comment.
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